

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-05 CEQ-02 COA-02 COME-00 EB-12 EPA-04

IO-14 NSF-04 SCI-06 FEA-02 DRC-01 /153 W

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R 041929Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4683

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 OTTAWA 3245

EO 11652 NA

TAGS SENV CA

SUBJ CANADA/US STOCKTAKING MEETING ON GREAT
LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE ISSUED OCTOBER 3
REGARDING GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT STOCKTAKING
MEETING:

BEGIN TEXT

"THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ANNOUNCED TODAY
THAT THE HONOURABLE JEANNE SAUVE, CANADA'S MINISTER OF THE
ENVIRONMENT, OPENED A MEETING OF UNITED STATES AND CANADIAN
OFFICIALS IN OTTAWA ON OCTOBER 2 TO REVIEW THE PROGRESS IN
IMPLEMENTING THE GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT SIGNED
BY THE TWO COUNTRIES ON APRIL 15, 1972. THIS WAS THE FOURTH
SUCH MEETING FOR THE TWO COUNTRIES AND FOCUSED ON THE
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND ANNUAL
REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION (IJC)
ON WATER QUALITY IN THE GREAT LAKES.

"MADAME SAUVE REMINDED THOSE PRESENT THAT THEY HAD
A DUTY NOT ONLY TO THE POPULATION AROUND THE LAKES BUT TO
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MANY OTHER IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES WHO WERE WATCHING WITH

INTEREST THE PROGRESS OF THE WORLD'S FIRST MAJOR INTERNATIONAL POLLUTION ABATEMENT AGREEMENT. IN RECALLING THE HIGH HOPES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SIGNATURE OF THE AGREEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENT AND THE CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER, SHE EXPRESSED HER SATISFACTION AT THE LONG TERM OUTLOOK FOR WATER QUALITY IN THE GREAT LAKES BUT WARNED THAT THE WORLD THRUST IN THE FIELD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION WOULD BE GREATLY AFFECTED BY THE FUTURE RATE OF PROGRESS OF THE PROGRAMS UNDER THE AGREEMENT.

"CLEANING UP THE GREAT LAKES IS BECOMING THE GREATEST ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT IN THE HISTORY OF THIS CONTINENT, SAID FITZHUGH GREEN, ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND UNITED STATES DELEGATION CHAIRMAN. 'ON THE UNITED STATES SIDE ALONE, IT WILL REQUIRE THE EFFORTS OF THOUSANDS OF DEDICATED ENVIRONMENTALISTS AT THE THREE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT - FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL - AND BILLIONS OF DOLLARS. RUSSELL TRAIN, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, ASKED ME TO EXPRESS HIS PERSONAL SATISFACTION AT THIS STOCKTAKING THAT BOTH COUNTRIES ARE ON SCHEDULE AND LIVING UP TO THE AGREEMENT SIGNED BY THE HEADS OF OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS.'

"THE COMMISSION'S REPORT STATED THE 98 PERCENT OF THE SEWERED POPULATION ON THE CANADIAN SIDE OF THE LAKES WOULD HAVE ADEQUATE TREATMENT BY THE AGREEMENT'S TARGET DATE OF DECEMBER 31, 1975. CANADIAN AND ONTARIO OFFICIALS EMPHASIZED THEIR INTENTION TO MAINTAIN THIS PACE OF CONSTRUCTION AND REPORTED THAT STEPS WERE UNDERWAY TO EXPAND THE CANADA-ONTARIO AGREEMENT WHICH WAS SIGNED IN AUGUST 1971 IN ANTICIPATION OF THE CANADA-UNITED STATES AGREEMENT. THIS EXPANSION ENTAILS THE PROVISION OF SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL FUNDS BY THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S CENTRAL MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION AND BY ONTARIO TO MEET RISING COSTS OF CONSTRUCTING MUNICIPAL SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS.

"THE COMMISSION ESTIMATED THAT 60 PERCENT OF THE SEWERED POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES PORTION OF THE BASIN WOULD HAVE ADEQUATE TREATMENT BY THE END OF 1975, AND CALLED UPON THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION TO RELEASE CURRENTLY IMPOUNDED

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UNITED STATES FEDERAL GRANT FUNDS FOR SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT CONSTRUCTION TO AVOID POSSIBLE DELAYS IN FUTURE CONSTRUCTION. THE UNITED STATES SIDE EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT IMPOUNDMENT WOULD LEAD TO FUTURE DELAYS AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT IF IT APPEARS THAT SUCH DELAYS WERE LIKELY TO OCCUR, SUFFICIENT FUNDS WOULD BE RELEASED.

"UNITED STATES OFFICIALS REPORTED SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IN THE UNITED STATES MUNICIPAL WASTE TREATMENT CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM SINCE THE MAY 22 MEETING OF THE GOVERNMENTS IN WASHINGTON, D.C. AT THAT TIME, \$495 MILLION HAD BEEN GRANTED TO 156 PROJECTS IN THE GREAT LAKES SYSTEM SINCE SIGNING THE AGREEMENT. TOTAL COSTS FOR THESE PROJECTS, INCLUDING FEDERAL, STATE AND LOCAL FUNDS WAS \$776 MILLION. DURING THE PERIOD MAY 22 TO SEPTEMBER 20, ADDITIONAL FEDERAL GRANTS TALLING \$245 MILLION WERE AWARDED TO 73 GREAT LAKES BASIN PROJECTS, WHICH INVOLVES A TOTAL EXPENDITURE OF \$323 MILLION. SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT, \$740 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDS HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO 221 PROJECTS IN THE GREAT LAKES SYSTEM REPRESENTING A TOTAL COST OF OVER \$1.1 BILLION.

"PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY IS THE FACT THAT DURING THE MAY TO SEPTEMBER PERIOD, 51 PERCENT OF THE \$480 MILLION AWARDED FOR PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE GREAT LAKES STATES WENT TO PROJECTS IN THE GREAT LAKES BASIN. THIS RATE IS CONSIDERABLY ABOVE THE HISTORICAL RATE OF 31 PERCENT. TO DATE, ABOUT 38 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDS AWARDED IN THE GREAT LAKES STATES UNDER THE 1972 WATER POLLUTION CONTROL ACT HAVE BEEN IN THE GREAT LAKES BASIN.

"SINCE THE PREVIOUS STOCKTAKING MEETING, ONTARIO REPORTED THAT SEVEN PROJECTS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED BRINGING THE LEVEL OF ADEQUATE SEWAGE TREATMENT FACILITIES TO 85 PERCENT FOR THE POPULATION SERVED WITH SEWERS. EIGHTY-TWO PERCENT OF THE SEWERED POPULATION ARE NOW SERVED WITH SECONDARY TREATMENT OR EQUIVALENT FACILITIES.

"BOTH SIDES TOOK SATISFACTION FROM THE COMMISSION'S
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CONCLUSION THAT THE RATE OF INCREASE IN THE HISTORICAL DEGRADATION OF THE LOWER LAKES, PARTICULARLY LAKE ERIE, APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN HALTED AND THAT THE PHOSPHORUS LOADING REDUCTIONS CALLED FOR IN THE AGREEMENT WERE SO FAR BEING MET ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BASIN.

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ACTION EUR-25

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NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-05 CEQ-02 COA-02 COME-00 EB-12 EPA-04

IO-14 NSF-04 SCI-06 FEA-02 DRC-01 /153 W

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R 041929Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4684

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"OF THE 466 MUNICIPAL WASTE-WATER TREATMENT FACILITIES REQUIRING PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL IN THE U.S. PORTION OF THE GREAT LAKES BASIN, 218 ARE NOW PROVIDING PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL. BY THE END OF 1975, IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT 300 WILL BE PROVIDING PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH OBJECTIVES OF THE AGREEMENT. DURING THE SAME PERIOD, ABOUT 200 SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS IN ONTARIO ARE EXPECTED TO EMPLOY PHOSPHORUS REMOVAL.

"IN RESPONSE TO CONTINUED UNITED STATES CONCERNS OVER THE USE OF NTA AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR PHOSPHORUS, BOTH SIDES EXCHANGED RESULTS OF RECENT RESEARCH IN THIS AREA.

"BOTH SIDES RECOGNIZED THAT THERE WAS VALIDITY IN THE IJC'S CALL FOR IMPROVED ANALYSIS OF WATER QUALITY DATA AND UNDERTOOK, WITH THE AID OF THE BOARD STRUCTURE ESTABLISHED UNDER THE IJC, TO INCREASE THE USE OF COMMON PROCEDURES AMONG THE JURISDICTIONS CONCERNED AND TO PLACE ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS ON DATA ANALYSIS. BOTH SIDES EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCUMENTING THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE LAKES BOTH FROM THE STANDPOINT OF ENSURING THAT EACH COUNTRY MEETS ITS COMMITMENTS AND IN RECOGNITION THAT THE GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT IS THE FIRST MAJOR INTERNATIONAL POLLUTION ABATEMENT ACTIVITY EVER ATTEMPTED ANYWHERE IN THE UNCLASSIFIED

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WORLD.

"UNITED STATES EPA ANNOUNCED THAT ITS CHICAGO OFFICE HAS ESTABLISHED A GREAT LAKES SURVEILLANCE BRANCH TO ANALYZE

AND INTERPRET GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY DATA. THE NEW BRANCH IS STAFFED BY EIGHT PROFESSIONALS, AND SEVEN ADDITIONAL STAFF POSITIONS WILL BE ADDED BY THE END OF THE YEAR. THE BRANCH WILL WORK CLOSELY WITH THE CHICAGO OFFICE'S 33-MAN REGIONAL LABORATORY, WHICH IS PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR SAMPLE ANALYSIS AND QUALITY CONTROL.

"BOTH SIDES OUTLINED STEPS THEY WERE TAKING TO RESPOND TO THE COMMISSION'S CONCLUSIONS REGARDING WATER-BORNE VIRUSES AND PERSISTENT CONTAMINANTS. THEY EXPRESSED APPRECIATION THAT THE COMMISSION IN THIS AREA WAS DRAWING THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTENTION TO FUTURE REQUIREMENTS IN ORDER TO ENSURE MAXIMUM PROTECTION FOR THE PUBLIC.

"THE TWO SIDES DISCUSSED AT LENGTH THE COMMISSION'S COMMENTS ON THE NEED FOR COMPATIBLE VESSEL WASTE REGULATIONS. THE CANADIAN SIDE EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING SUCH REGULATIONS IN PLACE WELL BEFORE THE TARGET DATE IN THE AGREEMENT AND REPORTED THEIR READINESS TO PROMULGATE EXISTING DRAFT CANADIAN REGULATIONS CALLING FOR HIGH QUALITY TREATMENT. UNITED STATES OFFICIALS POINTED OUT THAT THE 1972 AMENDMENTS TO THE WATER POLLUTION ACT REQUIRE EPA TO PROMULGATE A REGULATION DELINEATING PROCEDURES THAT WOULD RESULT IN NO DISCHARGE OF SEWAGE INTO SOME OR ALL OF THE WATERS OF A STATE FOLLOWING CERTAIN STATUTORY ACTIONS BY THE STATE AND EPA. IN PRELIMINARY ACTIONS TAKEN JOINTLY WITH THE COAST GUARD, EPA IS RE-EXAMINING THE VESSEL WASTE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM AND THE REGULATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN AND MUST BE PROMULGATED TO RESPOND TO THE ACT. ALTHOUGH NO FINAL DECISIONS HAVE BEEN MADE, EXPLORATIONS ARE UNDERWAY TO FOCUS ON THE COMPATIBILITY OF STANDARDS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. THE UNITED STATES EPA EXPECTS TO PROPOSE A REGULATION ON VESSEL WASTE SOON.

"THE MEETING TOOK PARTICULAR NOTE OF A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE COMMISSION'S UNCLASSIFIED

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ON-GOING STUDY OF POLLUTION FROM LAND-USE ACTIVITY. IT WAS RECOGNIZED THAT THESE WOULD REQUIRE CAREFUL EXAMINATION BY THE VARIOUS JURISDICTIONS CONCERNED.

"UNITED STATES OFFICIALS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT EPA'S CHICAGO OFFICE IS ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SEDIMENT CONTROL LEGISLATION BY CONDUCTING STATE LEVEL SEDIMENT AND EROSION CONTROL CONFERENCES JOINTLY WITH THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS. THIS EFFORT RESPONDS TO THE IJC RECOMMENDATION THAT THE GOVERNMENTS ENACT EFFECTIVE SEDIMENT CONTROL LEGISLATION WITH EMPHASIS ON

URBAN AND SUBURBAN AREAS. TO DATE IN THE GREAT LAKES BASIN, MICHIGAN, OHIO, AND PENNSYLVANIA HAVE ENACTED SUCH LEGISLATION. INDIANA, ILLINOIS, MINNESOTA, NEW YORK AND WISCONSIN ARE NOW DRAFTING SUCH LEGISLATION.

"ALSO DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING WERE CURRENT EFFORTS TO REFINE THE OBJECTIVE FOR RADIOACTIVITY CONTAINED IN THE AGREEMENT, CANADA-UNITED STATES CONSULTATIONS AIMED AT DEVELOPING AN AGREED LIST OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES AND THE RECENT PROMULGATION OF CANADIAN REGULATIONS DESIGNED TO INCREASE VESSEL SAFETY ON THE GREAT LAKES.

"AT THE CLOSE OF THE MEETING BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE LONG TERM OUTLOOK FOR THE LAKES IN RESPONSE TO REMEDIAL PROGRAMS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY BOTH COUNTRIES UNDER THE AGREEMENT.

"ROBERT FUNSETH, COUNSELLOR FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS, UNITED STATES EMBASSY AND FITZHUGH GREEN, ASSOCIATE ADMINISTRATOR FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, WERE CO-CHAIRMEN OF THE 22-PERSON UNITED STATES DELEGATION REPRESENTING FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, UNITED STATES COAST GUARD, UNITED STATES ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY, GREAT LAKES BASIN COMMISSION, WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES. THE CANADIAN DELEGATION INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND WELFARE, AND THE

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ONTARIO MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT. OBSERVERS FROM BOTH THE CANADIAN AND UNITED STATES SECTIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION ALSO PARTICIPATED."

END TEXT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLLUTION CONTROL, SEWAGE SYSTEM, GREAT LAKES AGREEMENT, ENVIRONMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974OTTAWA03245
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740281-0955
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741072/aaaacjng.tel
Line Count: 318
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 APR 2002 by kellerpr>; APPROVED <29 APR 2002 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CANADA/US STOCKTAKING MEETING ON GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT
TAGS: SENV, CA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005